



sustainable sustenance

at **COPPERLEAF**

visit this tiny restaurant in seatac BY ETHAN CHUNG | PHOTOS BY JEFF HOBSON

A talented Northwest chef who's received accolades in Esquire and Bon Appetit and a five-year veteran of Napa Valley's famed French Laundry restaurant are creating an amazing culinary experience in a small 30-seat restaurant in SeaTac that's surrounded by 18 acres of protected wetlands. »

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*The intimate 30-seat dining room
at Copperleaf*





*Chestnut soup with
brown butter financier*

Copperleaf is an intimate farm-to-table dining room tucked away in the Cedarbrook Lodge, just a few minutes from Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The property used to be Washington Mutual's executive retreat. The company would hold its corporate meetings there as well as provide banquet and meeting space for others. Cedarbrook now is a 104-room lodge that caters to business and luxury travelers and still maintains its focus on providing corporate meeting space. But those in the know go there to dine.

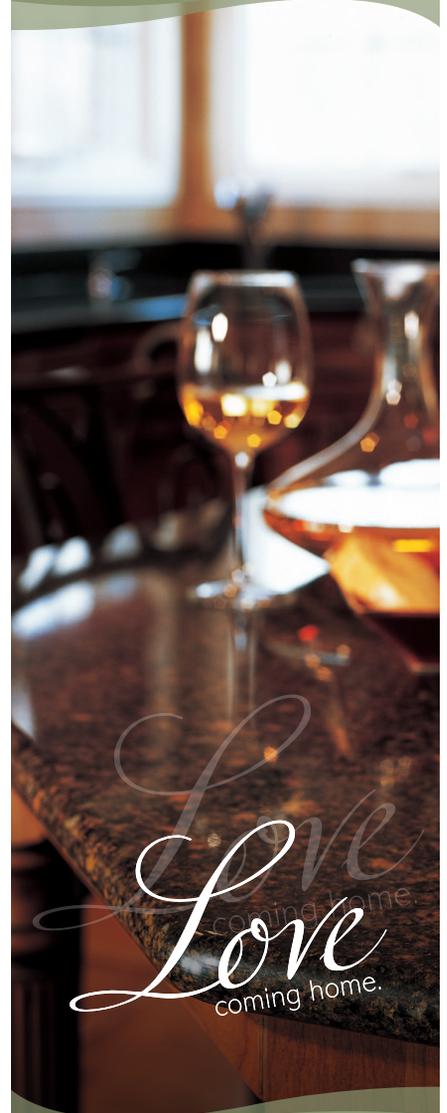
After Washington Mutual's demise and the transition to hotel was in motion, Roy Breiman, who previously ran the Salish Lodge's culinary program, became Cedarbrook's culinary director. He hired executive chef Mark Bodinet, former saucier at French Laundry, to run the kitchen at Copperleaf. Together, the duo is dreaming up big things in the small space.

Open since September 2009, Copperleaf serves contemporary American cuisine, with produce, dairy, meat, and seafood that comes from as close to the property as possible, some of which come from the chef's garden on Cedarbrook's grounds. The practice falls in line with the lodge's other sustainable practices, which include unique disposable to-go containers made of sugarcane, advanced onsite composting, water reclamation (the reusing of runoff water to provide the property with non-fresh water needs, like watering the lawn and gardens) and a mushroom inoculation program for water purification. Large buildings like the lodge can create runoff with all the Northwest rain and to prevent it from flowing back into the wetlands, the team grows oyster mushrooms along the edge of the property facing the wetlands. The mushrooms act as a filter for the runoff, helping purify the water before its return to nature.

"We really just want to be an inspiration and an example or model to what people can do and what possibilities are out there in urban environments to be able to give back to the planet," Breiman said. "That's what our culture is about here."

And you can taste this vigilant and considerate culture in the food at Copperleaf. Carefully selected vendors such as Willy Greens Organic Farm in Monroe and Full Circle Farm in Carnation for produce; Bluebird Grain Farms' faro (a grain) »

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Wenatchee apple salad



WHEN YOU GO

Copperleaf
18525 36th
Ave. S., Seattle,
206.901.9268, cedar-
brooklodge.com

LUNCH Daily,
11:30am to 2pm,
\$8 and up for
starters, \$12 and
up for entrees

DINNER Daily, 5pm
to 9:30pm, \$10 and
up for starters, \$15
and up for entrees

grown in Upper Methow Valley fields; Kent's Wild Wheat Bakery for bread and rolls and Mad Hatcher Farm in Ephrata for smaller meats such as quail, rabbit, squab and more.

Bodinet's skills shine through at Copperleaf. Chestnut soup is delicately hand-poured at the table over a brown butter financier and served with black truffles and nutmeg crème fraiche. It's a rich beginning, but a comforting way to start a late-winter meal. The Wenatchee apple salad is like a painting on a plate (truly – Chef Bodinet uses a paintbrush to play with the vibrant colors of the roasted beets). You can order a selection of small plates like Hawaiian blue prawns or St. Jude albacore tuna, but don't miss the Snake River crisp pork belly, an indulgent piece of pig that will inundate your mouth with flavor and texture. Or go full fare with a large plate, with selections such as Dungeness crab gnocchi, Shiner's Farm fallow venison or the aforementioned Mad Hatcher Farm rabbit with Brussels sprouts, garnet yams, Raymond cranberries and dijon mustard.

Lunch also is served at Copperleaf, with slightly more-casual fare that includes salads and sandwiches. The Copperleaf Bar serves a bevy of craft cocktails, Northwest microbrews and a nice list of wines; 40 percent are either biodynamic or fully sustainable wineries within the Pacific Northwest, Breiman said.

If you're planning on heading out of town, Copperleaf is a convenient stop before (or after) your flight. It doesn't hurt to take part in a dining experience that fosters a higher ecological ideology. Plus, the food, excellent service and intimate dining room make Copperleaf a destination in its own right, whether you're looking for a quiet dinner for two or a meal to close the deal. **S**

Snake River crisp pork belly

